

REMARKS

I. Introduction.

Claims 1-20 are pending and stand rejected. Various groups of the claims were subjected to rejections under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a).

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

A. Rejection of Claims 1-10.

Claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,403,548, Aibe, et al. in view of U.S. Patent 5,772,959, Bermas.

Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn. The Applicants incorporate their remarks in their previous Amendment in response to this rejection. Applicants still believe their position is correct.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to provide that the subject matter in these claims comprises two filters in order to address the response to Applicants' arguments in the Office Action. Claims 9 and 10 have been canceled without prejudice. The Applicants may, however, pursue the claims in their original form at a later date.

B. Rejection of Claims 11-17 and 20.

Claims 11-17 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,403,548, Aibe, et al. in view of U.S. Patent 5,772,959, Bermas and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,288,306, Aibe, et al.

The Office Action states that Aibe, et al. ('306) teaches multiple filter members that can be used interchangeably, and that it would have been obvious to modify the method and apparatus of Aibe ('548) to include multiple filter members since utilizing a plurality of filter members having varying adsorbent affinities for malodorous components, even a gas containing many kinds of malodorous or toxic components can be efficiently eliminated.

The Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn. As stated, in Applicants' previous response, the Aibe, et al. '306 reference does disclose multiple filter members, but they are all located within the housing of the gas treating apparatus. The activated carbon honeycomb elements are not described as being

used in a confined space (for example, a refrigerator) outside of the housing of the gas treating apparatus. None of the references disclose a method for deodorizing air using a first filter member comprising an air moving member and a filter element associated with said air moving member and a second filter member, and positioning a second filter member inside a confined space independent of the first filter member.

Further, Claim 20 has been amended to clarify that the substance being emitted is not merely deodorized air.

C. Rejection of Claims 18-19.

Claims 18-19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,403,548, Aibe, et al. in view of U.S. Patent 5,772,959, Bermas and further in view of U.S. Patent 2,025,657, Ganz.

The Office Action states that both Aibe, et al. and Bermas fail to teach the concept of having complementary hemispherical interfacing parts between the filter member and the air-moving member. The Office Action states that Ganz discloses a hemispherical filter member for deodorizing air. The Office Action further states that it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art to modify the air-moving member of Aibe, et al. to include a spherical filter member since such a shape has an attractive appearance.

The Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn. The Office Action admits that the Aibe, et al. and Bermas references fail to teach the concept of having complementary hemispherical interfacing parts between the filter member and the air-moving member. The Ganz reference is not used in combination with an air-moving member. As discussed in Applicants' previous response, it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the air-moving member of Aibe, et al. to include a spherical filter member because there would have been no motivation or reason to do so. The Aibe, et al. reference is directed to an apparatus that has an internal compartment for an activated carbon honeycomb element. It would not make sense to use a spherical activated carbon honeycomb element because this compartment is not configured to accept a spherically-shaped element. There is no teaching or suggestion in the Aibe, et al. reference to provide a filter member is used in conjunction with an air moving member that is held in place thereon by gravitational forces and the surface topology of the interfacing parts of the filter member and the air moving member. Further, contrary to the asserted motivation in the Office Action there is no need to be concerned

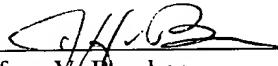
with the "attractive appearance" of the honeycomb element in Aibe because it is hidden from view when in use. The activated carbon honeycomb element in the Aibe, et al. reference is contained in a closed compartment.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, Claim 17, from which Claims 18 and 19 depend, has been amended to specify that the claimed air moving member has an open top portion that is exposed to the outside environment that serves as base for said filter member.

III. Summary.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of all claims are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
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